

Royal Borough of Greenwich

Representations against Interim Steps

**Star & Garter Public House
60 Old Woolwich Road
London, SE10 9NY**

**Decision Notice
13th August 2021**

In reaching its decision the Licensing Sub-Committee (“LSC”) considered and had regard to the Council’s Statement of Licensing Policy, the Licensing Act 2003, Regulations made thereunder, and the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under S.182 of that Act. In discharging its statutory function, the LSC did so with a view to promoting the licensing objectives and specifically the prevention of crime and disorder.

The Sub-Committee gave full and proper regard to the Certificate from the Superintendent of Police that the premises are associated with serious crime and disorder.

The LSC received submissions from the premises licence-holder and the manager of the premises, Mr Tarrant. The LSC then received submissions PC Crossman and Sergeant Renno for the police.

Mr Tarrant submitted that he had been managing the premises for 20 years and there had been no issues previously, other than some complaints of noise around 2005. The Staff did not see anything at all of the incident resulting in the stabbing of the victim, customers are all mainly older people, and it is the safest pub in Greenwich. The victim had gone outside and was then in and out of the pub, a girl had brought him in to help clean up in the toilets, the staff called the ambulance but should have called the police. Mr Tarrant stated it was his fault that the CCTV was not working, it had ceased to work 18 months ago. The pub does not have youngsters or tourist coming in, and all the regulars are known, they have been signing in, including addresses, because of Covid-19.

The licence-holder and DPS, confirmed that she had held the licence since 1990, and never had to call the police, never had any problems, that she was very upset by the incident.

Pc Crossman submitted that the stabbing was an ongoing live investigation, the staff at the premises did not call the police but instead only called the manager, Mr Tarrant. Whilst there may not be any records of previous trouble at the premises, it did not translate to no trouble taking place over many years, but that it was not reported. The staff were under a duty to prevent crime and disorder and protect customers. The incident took place mere metres from the bar itself, any bar staff worth their salt would have spotted the victim and suspect stand up to remonstrate with each other, before the stabbing took place. The victim has informed the police that he is regularly in the pub, as is the suspect.

The premises did not have any measures in place to deal with incidents, and Rita Hall, the licence-holder had stated to police “they have been barred”, meaning the suspect and presumably the victim. The victim was in hospital for 8 days and nearly lost his life.

Sergeant Renno stated that if the paramedics had not called the police, vital evidence would have been lost. No one else called the police. Someone could get away for a serious crime. The premises did not have any procedures in place, they ought to work with the police and create a safe environment for customers and staff. There had been nothing offered by the licence-holder or Mr Tarrant.

The LSC in reaching its decision noted that no explanation was provided for the failure of the staff to call the police. Nor did Mr Tarrant explain why he did not call the police when his staff telephoned him regarding the stabbing or instruct his staff to do so. The approach of the management is concerning and highlighted by Mr Tarrant’s response to the police submissions that he will instruct his staff to call the police in future, as well as the failure to rectify the CCTV system which could have supplied vital evidence for this serious violent incident given that no customers or bar staff appear to have not noticed or seen anything. There was also no explanation for public nuisance from customers being in the middle of the road drinking and leaning on parked vehicles.

The LSC is not satisfied that lifting the interim suspension of the premises licence will promote the crime prevention licensing objective. The LSC accept the evidence of the police and it is more than likely that the suspect is a known regular in the premises.

In reaching its decision, the LSC had regard, and gave weight to, the live investigation taking place by the police, the very different explanation provided by the manager and licence-holder for the incident, and that the bar staff have been working in the premises for at least 2 years or more as confirmed by the manager's submissions.

The Interim Step to suspend the premises licence shall remain in force.

The Premises Licence holder may make representations against this LSC decision if there is a subsequent material change in circumstances. Upon receipt of any representation against the interim continuation of the suspension of the premises licence, the Licensing Authority shall convene a hearing within 48 hours.